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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/673,467	05/02/2001	Sverre Johannesen Overa	2000-1408A	7612

7590 03/21/2003

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EXAMINER

MANOHARAN, VIRGINIA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1764

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 09/673,467	Applicant(s) OVERA ET AL.	
Examiner Virginia Manoharan	Art Unit 1764	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-16 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-7, 9 and 11-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8, 10 and 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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The substitute specification filed as attachment to amendment filed 12/26/02, paper # 7, has not been entered because it does not conform to 37 CFR 1.125(b), i.e., the statement as to lack of new matter under 37 CFR 1.125 (b) is missing.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5-7, 9 and 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO '541.

The above reference is applied for the same reasons as set forth at page 4 of the previous Office action.

Claims 10 and 8 (combined) and claim 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants' arguments filed Dec. 26, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants' arguments such as "... WO '541 does not meet the limitation of the collection line, being connected with the gas valve which is operable to relieve gas pressure from the processing section, being connected to at least one low-pressure store. Similarly, it does not meet the method step of conducting the gas from the

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processing section to the at least one low-pressure store with the collection line as recited in claim 11 ..." are not persuasive of patentability for the following reasons:

Contrary to applicants' assertions, WO '451 disclosure at pages 18-19 of "... the collector conduit (40) which advances the excess gas is connected (at 66) to a connection conduit (68) which connects the separator (22) in the separation plant operating at the lowest pressure with a first compressor (26) in the compressor plant, for recovery of the excess gas on conducting together with the gas volume from the separation plant ... the collection conduit (40) is connected to the connection conduit (68) in that region (66) where the gas pressure is lowest" are deemed to read on the claimed invention. That is, the lines and valves 70, 80, 40, 66, 68 to (22) shown e.g., in Fig. 2 would at least read on the argued "... gas valve operable to relieve gas pressure from the processing section, connect with a collection line which is operable to conduct the gas from the processing section to at least one low-pressure store, along with at least one second line that is connected to the at least one low-pressure store as recited in claim 5, and in method form in claim 11..." The prior art devices, e.g., the device or element (22) deemed corresponding to the claimed low -pressure store; the element (20) deemed corresponding to the second line; and the element (80) as the gas valve are all deemed capable of performing the same functions as the elements in the claimed invention as they constitute the same structures. Furthermore, the argued torch (74) of the prior art is not precluded in the broad claims 5 and 11 by the recitation of "comprising" which is an all -inclusive terms.

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The arguments relative to Mair are moot since this alternative reference has been dropped from the above rejection.

Thus, in the absence of anything which may be "new" or unexpected result", a prima facie case of obviousness has been reasonably established by the art and has not been rebutted.

Unexpected results must be established by factual evidence. Mere arguments or conclusory statements in the specification, applicants' amendments, or the Brief do not suffice. In re Lindner, 457 F.2d 506, 508, 173 USPQ 356, 358 (CCPA 1972). In re Wood, 582, F.2d 638, 642, 199 USPQ 137, 140 (CCPA 1978).

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Virginia Manoharan whose telephone number is 703-

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308-3844. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on 703-308-4311. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9462 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

V. Manoharan/mn
March 20, 2003

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